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# **VICTORIOUS SOCIALIST CONSTRUCTION**

**||| IN THE  
SOVIET UNION**

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**WM. Z. FOSTER**

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## Victorious Socialist Construction in the Soviet Union

By WM. Z. FOSTER

### I. The Decay of Capitalism and the Advance of Socialism

The most important political fact of our times is that while the world capitalist system is plunging deeper and deeper into economic and political crisis the building of Socialism in the Soviet Union is going ahead with tremendous success. The old world system of capitalism, breeder of war, poverty, ignorance and oppression, is played out historically and is in decay: the new world system of Socialism, which will emancipate humanity, is being born. The world is travelling rapidly into a profoundly revolutionary transformation, economically, politically and socially.

#### (a) *The World Crisis of Capitalism*

The deepening world crisis of capitalism is both economic and political. Thousands of factories are shut down in the various countries, with at least 15,000,000 totally unemployed and as many more working only part time. The capitalists cannot keep in operation their privately owned system of industry. The basic reason for this is their inability to dispose of the great masses of commodities which the workers produce, but which the workers, robbed of a large part of the fruits of their toil, cannot buy back. The crisis arises out of the insoluble capitalist problem of markets,—the great and growing disparity between the productive forces of society (mines, mills, etc.) and declining ability of the capitalist markets to absorb the products of the industries. Although hundreds of millions of toilers, who are willing to work and to produce, hunger and suffer for the

necessities of life, capitalist industry, based upon production for profit, closes down from "over-production."

The capitalist economic crisis produces far-reaching political effects, which threaten (and which will eventually destroy) the whole capitalist system. The capitalists try (by fierce local competition and by capturing the world market) to dispose of the mountains of general commodities and surplus capital that they have exploited out of the workers. To carry this on they speed-up the workers beyond human endurance and slash the wages of their workers; they ruthlessly exploit the colonial peoples, and they come into violent collision with the market-grabbing capitalists of other countries. The general result is an intensification of class antagonisms and national conflicts in all directions. The workers, under the attacks of the capitalists upon their living standards, organizations, etc., become radicalized and develop revolutionary counter-attacks; the colonial peoples organize anti-imperialistic revolutions; and the capitalist governments fly at each other's throats and prepare for war against one another, and especially against the Soviet Union.

The American crisis has greatly sharpened the general world crisis of capitalism. The wholesale shutdown of American industry, throwing out of work at least 6,000,000 workers and with many more in prospect, has dealt the shaky capitalist system of the world a deadly blow. It has also drastically refuted the propaganda of those capitalistic elements who have tried to maintain that American capitalism had found the secret of permanent "prosperity" and that it had become immune to crisis and decay. In order to try to liquidate the crisis, the capitalists, with the assistance of their social fascist tools of the American Federation of Labor and the Socialist Party, are cutting the wages of the workers, speeding them up, instituting a growing regime of fascist terrorism in this country, extending military subjugation of Latin-America, and entering into a ferocious competition against England, France, etc., to increase exports. Such is the program of Hoover's National Business Council. All of this can only provoke bigger and more bitter struggles of American workers against the employers, strong movements of revolt in Latin-

American countries, and a tremendous sharpening of the world rivalries of the various imperialist powers.

International capitalism now finds itself in a most serious and increasingly difficult situation. Paralyzed industries, mass unemployment, broad and sweeping strikes in the industrial lands, increasing revolutionary movements in China, India, and other colonial and semi-colonial countries; enormous sharpening of the war danger. On all sides the capitalists prepare for war. Great Britain and the United States, struggling for world control, have for several years past been on the verge of open hostilities. Nor can this dangerous situation be obscured by the officially inspired pacifist propaganda. The various "peace" gatherings and "disarmament" conferences of the capitalist governments are only so many maneuvering places for the various imperialist powers against each other, and first of all against the Soviet Union.

But, although capitalism goes deeper into crisis, it will not fall of its own weight. The capitalists will set up systems of fascism and try to hold the workers in subjection by open violence. They will seek to smash back the Soviet Union, advance guard of the revolution. They will try to find an outlet for their multiplying difficulties by making savage war against each other. Capitalism will not automatically collapse; it cannot be destroyed simply by the operation of economic forces. It will prolong its existence by one means or another, even though hundreds of millions are impoverished, until the workers by a supreme political act give it its deathblow. Already the toiling masses begin to take the offensive internationally against capitalism. That is the real meaning of the great surge forward in the Soviet Union, the developing workers counter-offensive in the industrial countries, the revolutionary upheavals in India and China. With the sharpening of the crisis of world capitalism, the masses will take on more and more militancy. Inspired by the great victories in the Soviet Union, and steeled by their own grievances, they will attack capitalism with increasing sharpness. The world stands before important revolutionary struggles. In these capitalism will surely break in some of its weakest links. And certainly, before most of us realize it, the workers will smash the power of capitalism on a world scale and set about building the revolutionary society of the workers.

*(b) Growth of Socialism in the Soviet Union*

In glaring and significant contrast to world capitalism dropping deeper into crisis, Socialism is now experiencing the most astounding growth and development in the Soviet Union. The world has never seen before such a tremendous expansion and advancement of industry, reorganization and extension of agriculture, and unparalleled raising of the standards of the working masses.

The building of industry in the Soviet Union proceeds at an unheard of pace. Great factories are being built and new manufacturing centers established on all sides. The Soviet Union is being transformed almost overnight into an industrial country. Even the capitalist press of the world, hostile though it is, is teeming with amazing stories of the colossal size and success of the Soviet Government's Five-Year Plan of Socialist Construction. In all other countries industry is stagnant; in the Soviet Union it flourishes like a bay tree.

Nor is the Soviet Union experiencing a temporary industrial "boom." It is a constant upward trend, ever increasing in speed and volume. Soviet industry is not limited by the problem of markets, with resultant crises and paralysis of industry, as is capitalism. The Russian workers get the full product of their labor, minus the minimum necessary for the administration of the country and the expansion of the industries to meet the rising standards of the workers. There is no surplus for which markets must be found on pain of stagnation and unemployment. The door is open to practically unlimited industrial expansion and social progress.

Soviet agriculture is also advancing at a pace which is even more striking in some respects than that of industry. The whole primitive system of agriculture is being mechanized, reconstructed, and developed upon a Socialist basis and the masses of peasantry are being won over to Socialism. In all other countries agriculture is in chronic crisis, with a rapidly deepening misery for hundreds of millions of peasants and agricultural workers. But in the Soviet Union it is going into a period of unequalled prosperity. The capitalist press of the world is compelled to betray even more astonishment at the revolution in agriculture in the Soviet Union than at the tremendous industrial upswing.

Simultaneously with the vast development of industry and agriculture goes a great improvement in the conditions of the workers. Wages steadily increase, while they decline in all capitalist countries. Unemployment, the curse of the capitalist world, is being rapidly wiped out in the Soviet Union by the introduction of the 7-hour day and the drawing of armies of workers into the newly built industries. Vast projects of education and general cultural development of the working masses are in course of application. Throughout the capitalist world, with its deepening crisis and attacks upon the workers' standards, the living and working conditions of the workers are constantly on the decline. But in the Soviet Union, with its great success in Socialist construction, these standards are rapidly rising in all phases. The revolutionary significance of this will not be lost upon the world's workers.

As the foundation for this revolutionary building of Socialism, the Russian workers, with the great proletarian fighter, Lenin, at their head, smashed the czarist and capitalist governments in 1917, set up their own Soviet Government, expropriated the capitalists, nationalized the industries and land, and defended the revolution in the teeth of a hostile capitalist world. Under the leadership of their great Communist Party, and through their trade unions, co-operatives, etc., they are now making tremendous strides in the construction of the new Socialist order, soon to be the new world system of society.

The Russian Revolution is the greatest political achievement in history. It is the result of the exercise of the most concentrated intelligence, dogged courage, and systematic organized effort ever put forth in the whole course of human society. It is the opening of a new era in human development, the beginning of an altogether higher order of social life. American workers, exploited by American imperialism and now exposed to the full rigors of the growing world crisis of capitalism, will do well to learn what is now taking place in the Soviet Union. The following pages will at least give an inkling of these world-shaking developments.



## II. Phenomenal Growth of Socialist Industry, Agriculture, and Well-Being of the Workers

### (a) *An Unparalleled Industrial Development*

During the early part of 1921 the Russian workers, after having successfully defended their revolution in armed struggle against the capitalist world, began to turn their energies to the rehabilitation and development of the antiquated and wrecked industries. Seven years of imperialist world war and civil war, capitalist blockade, counter-revolutionary sabotage, etc., had played havoc with these industries. Production had fallen almost to zero. By the end of 1920 there was being produced, in comparison with the pre-war figures: coal 26%, metal ore 1%, metal products 4%, textiles 12%, etc. Only 1,000,000 workers were employed in industry, as against 2,500,000 in 1917, and their product was only 20% of 1913. They received but 25% of pre-war wages.

It was an appalling prospect, with the country a prey to famine and pestilence, blockaded by the capitalist powers, and the workers totally inexperienced in the management of industry. But with heroic courage and in the face of immeasurable difficulties the workers carried through the rebuilding of the shattered industries. By the end of 1927 this period of reconstruction practically ended, and early in 1928 production in general averaged about 120 per cent of pre-war, as against England's 90 per cent, and Germany's 104 per cent.

Then began the present period of intensive Socialist development. The Soviet Government, October 1, 1928, launched its world famous Five-Year Plan of Socialist Construction. This is the greatest plan of general development ever put forward in any country. The *New York Herald* (Paris Edition), Jan. 2, 1930, says typically of it:

"No more ambitious economic effort has ever before been undertaken on so large a scale in human history. The plan aims to accomplish in half a decade an amount of industrialization which other nations—even a country as

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richly endowed by nature as the United States—took a generation or two to achieve."

Frazier Hunt, Hearst correspondent, reflecting the general capitalist amazement at the gigantic developments in the Soviet Union, says (*New York American*, Jan. 14, 1930):

"Japan, westernizing and industrializing herself 50 years ago, was doing child's play compared to what the Soviet Union is doing today."

The figures and scope of this vast plan stagger the imagination. In the five years, from October, 1928, to October, 1933, the total Government budget for industry and agriculture is 86 billion roubles or about 45 billion dollars, a rouble being worth about 52 cents. This involves the building of great power plants, metal works, chemical factories, railroads, and factories of all kinds in every corner of the country, as well as a profound reorganization and mechanization of agriculture, and extensive raising of the living and cultural standards of the workers and peasant masses.

As for the industrial phase of the program, it calls for a general increase over present production to 266% by October, 1933, the cutting of production costs by 35%, and factory prices by 25%. The total capital investment in industry will jump from 9½ billions to 21½ billion roubles. The yearly increase in industrial output is to be about 20%, as against 7% to 10%, the highest rate ever achieved by capitalist countries. Industrial output per worker annually will increase from 3000 to 5900 roubles.

The main weight of the Five-Year Plan is directed towards building the basic industries, thus to lay a real foundation beneath Russian industry and to make it practically independent of capitalist world economy. Electrical power production will be increased by 32 gigantic plants, from 5 billion to 22 billion kwh, an eleven-fold increase over 1913. The output of the chemical industry will be increased from 650 million roubles annually to over 2 billion, or 100 million more than the great German chemical industry. Coal production will be jumped up to 230%,

bringing the Soviet Union, with 70 million tons, to fourth place as a coal producing country. Pig iron production will leap from 3½ million tons to 10 million, making the Soviet Union the third country in this respect. The railways will be lengthened from 59,000 kilometers to 90,000, etc., etc.

Individual items in this immense industrial program are the great Dnieperstroy electrical plant, the biggest in the world; the great Stalingrad tractor plant, with a capacity of 40,000 per year or one tractor each six minutes, with another being planned for Kharkof, costing one billion roubles and to produce not less than 500,000 tractors per year; the Nijni-Novgorod automobile plant, with a yearly output of 140,000 machines; the great Volga-Don ship canal; the Turkestan-Siberia Railroad, and innumerable new oil projects, steel mills, textile factories, etc. These industries are just beginning to scratch the surface of the matchless natural resources of the Soviet Union.

The announcement of this unprecedented industrial program was greeted with scorn by capitalist "experts" throughout the world, and especially by those tools of the capitalists, the social-democrats, or more properly, social-fascists. They denounced as more than ridiculous the idea of the hated Bolsheviks being able to realize such an immense project. The proposed rate of 20% increase yearly in industrial production was declared fantastic and the whole Five-Year Plan was condemned as a fake rigged up for cheap propaganda purposes.

But again these capitalist elements, as always, totally underestimated the revolutionary energy and ability of the workers. The first year of applying the Five-Year Plan was an overwhelming success, so much so that the whole capitalist world could not ignore it. More than that, all the figures for the plan had to be drastically revised upward. Instead of accomplishing only the planned 21% increase in production, actually the increase was 24%. Similar plus figures were achieved in practically all the key points of Soviet economy. Now the slogan of the Communist Party, the great Party of the Russian workers, is "*Complete the Five-Year Plan in Four Years.*" All preliminary reports of progress achieved in the first months of the present year indicate that even the new goal will be accomplished. So rapid is the

growth that in the current year the products of industry will exceed those of last year by about 3 billion roubles.

The following figures indicate how greatly the tempo of development exceeds that foreseen by the original Five-Year Plan:

<i>5-Year Plan for year 1929-30</i>		<i>Revised Figures for year 1929-30</i>
Increase in total industrial output	21%	32%
Investment in industries	2,800,000,000 roubles	3,600,000,000
Production of:		
Coal	41,000,000 tons	47,000,000
Petroleum	14,800,000 "	16,100,000
Steel	5,200,000 "	6,100,000
Tractors	25,000 units	41,000
Agricultural Machinery	307,000,000 roubles	406,000,000

The new Russian industries are being built according to the latest technique and with amazing rapidity. Usually they are constructed on the American or German systems. The old factories and plants are being either demolished outright or fundamentally rebuilt. The construction work is being carried out upon a gigantic scale. Thus on 13 great jobs, costing 523 million roubles there are employed 193,000 workers. The work goes ahead with incredible speed, the whole country being in a fervor of building. On the vast Dnieperstroy power plant job the fastest American records for building massive concrete work were far surpassed. The Stalingrad plant has been built several months ahead of schedule and at 20% less than American costs.

Duranty, the *New York Times* correspondent, speaking of the new proposal to build the largest steel plant in Europe, says: "So vast are the present schemes and so great the apparent difficulties that it all sounds like madness." But the tempo of industrialization becomes faster and faster in spite of all obstacles. Never has the world seen the like. The success is undeniable. John Calder, American engineer on the Stalingrad plant, declares that "no one should doubt but that the 5-Year Plan will be successful."

A maze of problems confront the Russian workers in this

unprecedented task. But, undaunted, they batter through them. One of the most vital of these problems now is to find sufficient engineers, technicians, and skilled workers to build and operate the new industries. This thorny problem is being resolutely and successfully attacked. The government economic organs, the schools, universities, trade unions, etc., are carrying on an enormous campaign of industrial education and are turning out a veritable army of skilled workers of all degrees. The government program calls for the development in the coming four years of 85,000 full trained engineers (present force 30,000); 110,000 technical school graduates (present force 40,000), and 3,000,000 skilled workers. Vast numbers of workers are being rapidly trained and promoted to key industrial positions. Only a small percentage of the skilled help, engineers and workers, will come from abroad. As an example of the gigantic industrial educational work now (Jan. 1930) taking place—there are this winter 300,000 workers being trained for work in the building trades next summer. In all the capitalist countries the employers, confronting stagnant industries, are throwing millions of trained workers out of work; but in the forward-marching Soviet Union workers are being trained and drawn into the industries by millions.

The Soviet Union is (or rather was two years before) at about the same stage of industrial development as the United States of 50 years ago. But Mishutin, a Russian economist, estimates that at its present rate of development the Soviet Union will surpass the United States within 15 years. The 5-Year Plan is only a starter; it will be followed by far greater plans of development. The slogan of the Communist Party is "*In technique and economics we must overtake and pass the leading capitalist countries.*" Stalin, the General Secretary of the Communist Party and its present great leader, says:

"We are going full steam ahead to Socialism on the path of industrialization and we are leaving behind our century old backwardness. We shall become a metal producing country, a country of automobiles and tractors. Then let the capitalists, who boast of their civilization, try to catch us. Then we will see which countries are backward and which progressive."

(b) *The Revolution in Agriculture*

The success of the Five-Year Plan in the Soviet Union has been even more spectacular in agriculture than in industry. Primitive Russian agriculture, under the direct lead of the Workers' Government, is fairly leaping ahead from its antiquated methods of 1000 years ago to the most advanced farming system in the world. The present reorganization and development of Russian agriculture constitutes the swiftest and greatest advance ever made by the farming industry at any period in human history. The much-vaunted mechanization of American agriculture cannot be compared with it. Again we find the comparison, deadly for capitalism—while the agricultural situations in all capitalist countries are in constant crisis and the masses sink deeper and deeper into poverty, in the Soviet Union agriculture flourishes and prospers at an unheard of rate.

Although the 5-Year Plan has its economic center of gravity in industry, especially heavy industry, it also provides for a huge program of reorganizing and advancing agriculture. This involves mechanizing the industry upon a gigantic scale, combining and reorganizing the producing units from a petty individual basis to great collective and state farms, raising the productivity of the soil by fertilizers, bringing in new crops and farming systems, developing new methods of stock raising, etc., etc. In furtherance of this revolutionary program the Government, as part of the general 5-Year Plan, proposes to spend in agriculture, by October, 1933, approximately 23 billion roubles (11½ billion dollars).

Among the major items of this program are: 4½ billions for agricultural machinery, including 180,000 tractors (by 1938 it is expected to have 1 million tractors in the field). 1½ billion to develop industries (canning factories, dairies, etc.) using agricultural products; such a great increase in the use of fertilizer phosphates, nitrates, and lime, that it will overtop the use of these in the United States; an increase of the land under cultivation by 22½%; the vast extension of cotton planting, etc. And all this to be linked up with the reorganization of 27 million hectares of land (a hectare is 2½ acres) upon the basis of state farms (5

million) and collective farms (22 million). The fertility of the soil will be greatly improved and total production increased by at least 35½%.

This was the original plan, and, as usual, it was scoffed at by the capitalistic sceptics. But in practice it has been far exceeded, even more so than in the case of industry. The building of state and collective (cooperative) farms, supposedly the knottiest part of the problem, has gone ahead at a fabulous pace. The poor and middle peasants, catching the spirit of the new program, have literally rushed in great masses into the new modern farming units. Stalin says: "The collective farm movement has been transformed into a movement of millions of the main mass of the peasantry." The great difficulty now lies in giving the new collectives the necessary machinery and leadership. In the latter respect the trade unions are especially helping by sending many thousands of their workers onto the land to aid the peasants to handle their new machines and to build their organizations. The Red Army is sending similar contingents of helpers. Whole villages are joining *en masse*. Entire districts have already been reorganized upon the new basis. The program was exceeded in all other respects—thus in the year ending October, 1930, there will be 11,000 tractors produced instead of the 5,000 planned. In 18 months the great Stalingrad tractor works will begin to produce at the rate of 45,000 per year. By the end of 5 years there will be 300,000 tractors at work instead of the planned 180,000—at the time of the revolution there were only 500 in all Russia. And so in all phases of the program.

By the end of the first year, October, 1929, the state and collective farms expanded, instead of the 7% and 94% provided for in the 5-Year Plan, no less than 28% and 200% respectively. And now the movement goes faster than ever. By the end of this year such great districts as the Lower and Central Volga and the Northern Caucasus will be entirely collectivized. Now the slogan goes out to complete the 5-Year Plan on the farms in two more years. The following official figures give an idea of the tremendous scope and speed of this great agricultural development.

State Farms		Collectives	
1928 .....	1,425,000 hectares	1928 .....	1,390,000 hectares
1929 .....	1,816,000 "	1929 .....	4,262,000 "
1930 .....	3,380,000 "	1930 .....	15,000,000 "

Even the hostile capitalist press, accustomed though it is to belittle and misrepresent the Soviet Government, cannot entirely blink these great achievements. Below are a couple of typical comments:

"The world is used to surprises from Soviet Russia, but nothing is so sensational as the extraordinary growth of the collective agricultural undertakings."

*Chicago Daily News.*

"The agrarian policy of the Kremlin has had a splendid start. It would really seem that Socialism is winning the backward Russian village."

*New York Times.*

The state farms are organized directly by the Government and are operated by the workers upon a wage basis. They are the highest type of farm organization. There are now about 60 of these. They are usually huge in size and are veritable grain factories. One monster is the "Gigant" in the Northern Caucasus. It contains 130,000 hectares (almost 300,000 acres). It surpasses by far the famous Campbell ranch in Montana in size, degree of mechanization, type of organization, quantity of products, etc.

The collectives are cooperative farming enterprises. Their general evolution is in the direction of the state farm. Their formation is aided because the land is nationalized. The many small peasants combine their little holdings and set up a joint management. The Government works directly with them for its mechanization, the raising of its fertility, the introduction of new farming methods, etc. The benefit to the peasants is immediate and tremendous. This is the reason for their flocking in such huge numbers into the collectives. By October, 1930, there will be at least 100,000 of these new collective farms, embracing about 3 million peasant homesteads. In a very short time practically the whole Russian agriculture will be so reorganized.



This great reorganization movement is based largely upon the tractor. Once Lenin said, "If we had 100,000 tractors the whole agricultural question would be settled." Well, the tractors are about on hand—45,000 are now at work in the fields and the rest will soon come out of the new factories—and, as Lenin so clearly foresaw, the problem of the peasant and the farm is rapidly approaching solution.

The revolutionary significance of these agricultural developments can hardly be overestimated. First, they give a much broader economic base to the Soviet economy by extending socialized industry far out into the realms of agriculture. Then, they link the peasantry more firmly with the workers than ever, which means an enormous strengthening of the Soviet Government in every respect, not the least being its added ability to protect itself from the armed attacks of the hostile capitalist world. They unite the city and the country.

Especially these developments shatter the counter-revolutionary class of kulaks, or rich peasants. These elements have been the most vicious enemies of the Soviet regime. Controlling the production of a large amount of the grain, they have been able to seriously hamper the whole progress of Russian development. They have systematically tried to starve the revolution to death. They have practiced terrorism of the most ferocious kind in their efforts to stay the advancing revolution. They have relentlessly opposed the state and collective farm movement, seeking to block it from without, or, failing in this, to wreck the collectives from within. They have assassinated large numbers of representatives of the Soviet Government and members of the Communist Party.

But now the kulaks, long a most vital problem of the revolution, have been overwhelmingly defeated, even more decisively than have the so-called NEP-men in the cities. The new collective and state farms at once vastly increase grain production and bring this under control of the Government. This breaks the economic power of the kulaks. Besides, as the great wave for collectivization rolls onward it sweeps aside, like chaff, the reactionary kulaks. Formerly the policy of the Government, which frankly fought for the interests of the poor and middle farmers,

as against those of the rich farmers, was to restrict the exploitive practices of the latter. Now, with its great victory in collectivization, it is wiping out the kulaks altogether as a factor in agriculture. The slogan now is for the liquidation of the kulaks. This is an enormous gain for the revolution.

One of the practical fruits already of the victory in agriculture was the collection of 4 million tons more of grain this year than last. Also the seeded area has been increased by 13 million hectares. This tendency to greater production will increase by leaps and bounds within the next few years, with consequent vast quantities of foodstuffs on hand to feed the workers in the cities and to export as pay for the immense quantities of machinery now being imported and constructed.

The collectivization of the farms means the winning of the peasantry to Socialism. The effects of this will be international in scope. It will be an inspiration to downtrodden peasants everywhere, even as the growth of Socialism generally in the Soviet Union will steel the workers all over the world to fight against capitalism. Stalin thus sizes up this aspect of the situation:

"The peasants, considered by the capitalists as manure for the ground for capitalism, are on all sides abandoning the famous banner of 'private property' and are placing themselves on the basis of collectives and Socialism. The last hope of restoring capitalism is vanishing."

#### (c) *The Rise of the Workers' Standards*

Throughout the capitalist world, including the United States, the living and working standards of the toiling masses are on the decline. In the Soviet Union alone are they on the rise. The central objective of the Russian workers now is to lay a firm basis for Socialism by putting forth all possible efforts to build the industrial and agricultural system. And in doing this they are not forgetting the purpose for which they have carried through the revolution, the improvement of the condition of the workers. They are making gigantic strides in this direction now, as well as laying the basis for further huge advances socially by the rapid building of industry. Before the revolution the Russian workers

were the poorest paid and worst conditioned in Europe; but at the end of the 5-Year Plan they will be the best. And soon afterward they will catch up to and pass the economic standards of American workers, already on the decline.

Wages are being rapidly raised. The 5-Year Plan calls for an increase of 71% in wages and a cut of 23% in living costs. This will give the Russian workers, all factors considered, about 209% of pre-war wages. No doubt these figures will be exceeded in the accomplishment. In the year just past real wages advanced about 3%; the program for the coming year calls for a 15% increase.

Hours are being systematically shortened. In 1913 the work-day was of 10 to 12 hours. Now it averages just a little over 7 hours, with 6 hours for the youth and workers engaged in dangerous or unhealthy occupations. Last year 450,000 workers acquired the 7-hour day and this year it will be extended to 700,000 more. By October, 1933, it will be practically universal. At the end of the 5-Year Plan the question will be taken up of introducing the 6-hour day. With the present system of the uninterrupted working week of five days (that is, 4 days' work and 1 day's rest) the workers now have 77 days' rest yearly, as against 65 formerly.

Together with these improvements, there is being developed a tremendous Government program of social insurance; that is, insurance against unemployment, sickness, death, etc. Already the position of the Russian workers in this respect is far better than that of any other working class. In the United States, for example, the workers have no state insurance whatever. In the present mass unemployment the workers are left entirely without resources. The 5-Year Plan calls for great increases in the system of social insurance. How this system grows is indicated by the fact that in 1925 the sum of 66 million roubles was so paid, whereas in the past year this jumped to 1,128,000,000 roubles or 17 times as much. By the end of the 5-Year Plan it will be increased to over 2 billion roubles, despite the practical wiping out of unemployment.

Improvement of housing is going ahead rapidly. The 5-Year Plan calls for the spending of 4 billion roubles for building fine new homes for the workers to take the place of the horrible

shacks inherited from Czarism. Every Russian city is now the scene of tremendous building projects of this character. In industry, more and more care is taken of the workers' health and safety, the sum of 314 million roubles having been set aside for this purpose by the 5-Year Plan.

There is also going ahead a tremendous program of education of the masses, left unlettered by Czarism and Capitalism. This is totally without precedent in any capitalist country. Even capitalist educators have to admit its vast scope and fundamental character. It is one of the most outstanding features of the whole revolutionary situation. In 1913, out of 100 persons in Russia 77 were illiterate. Already this figure has been cut to 46, and by the end of the 5-Year Plan it will be reduced to 18. Illiteracy will then be completely liquidated in the industrialized sections of the country. The 5-Year Plan provides the gigantic sum of 21½ billion roubles for general social-cultural activities, of which 10½ billions are for education. The plan foresees the establishment of the compulsory education system throughout the Soviet Union. There is also a tremendous amount of additional educational work carried on by the Communist Party, the trade unions, cooperatives, cultural societies, etc. The 5-Year Plan provides also for vast increases in the number of workers' libraries, cinemas, clubs, peoples' houses, workers' literature, radios, theatres, vacations, excursions, camps, free medical attendance, etc. For example, radio sets will be increased from 300,000 to 7,000,000; cinemas — from 8,520 to 50,000; libraries — from 23,000 to 34,000, with 40,000 new traveling libraries, etc. All told, it is the most gigantic movement of its kind in history. Capitalism has nothing even remotely to compare with it. It would not even try to put such a revolutionary program into effect.

This great cultural movement affects not only the industrial workers but also the peasantry, especially as the latter is now being drawn into the collective farms and the building of Socialism. The peasant's economic condition is vastly improved and thru the thousands of schools and other cultural institutions built in his villages, he is beginning to emerge from his age-long isolation, ignorance and superstition. One detail of the program will draw 5 million peasants into short courses to study improved

agriculture. The sun of Socialist well-being is beginning to shine in even the darkest Russian villages.

Contrast this situation of broad and rapid improvement in every phase of the conditions of the toiling masses in the Soviet Union with the wage cuts, destructive speed-up, and general worsening of the workers' economic and political conditions in all the capitalist countries, and we have a picture of a healthy growing world system of Socialism in the first instance, and a decaying capitalist world system in the other. And all the great cultural advance now being made in the Soviet Union is only a beginning. Once there is a sufficient industrial basis laid, and that is being accomplished at incredible speed, and we will see the toilers in the Soviet Union leap forward culturally in a way that will startle the world and be a tremendous stimulation to the world's workers to follow the intelligent and revolutionary example of the Russian workers.

### III. The Struggle for Socialist Construction

The capitalists of the world are astounded at the scope and success of the 5-Year Plan. And well may be, for it represents an altogether higher plane of industrial and social development than their much-vaunted capitalist system. The 5-Year Plan would be quite impossible in any capitalist country. No such country has ever produced a plan of organized industrial and social development, and none ever will. The 5-Year Plan is a sign manual of the newer and higher social order that is developing in the Soviet Union, that is, Socialism.

The 5-Year Plan is possible in the Soviet Union because the Workers' Government has developed a new economic and political system, which calls into play a whole series of new constructive social forces and technical superiorities over capitalism. These are now being most intensely applied and utilized in carrying through the 5-Year Plan. So much so, that it constitutes a veritable struggle for industrialization, a fierce conflict against the backward Russian industrial technique, against the remnants of Russian capitalism, and against the attempts of world capitalism to strangle Socialism in the Soviet Union. At no time since the most acute phases of the armed revolutionary struggle have the workers put forth more determined and thoroughly organized efforts than now. The carrying through of the 5-Year Plan is a most intense battle for Socialism.

#### (a) *Superior Organization of Socialism*

One of the major advantages of the Soviet system which enable it to drive through to the accomplishment of the 5-Year Plan is its incomparably higher type of organization, socially, politically, and economically, than that of capitalism. Not only does the Supreme Economic Council immediately direct the course of the body of industry, but the entire complex of Soviet institutions, Government, trade unions, cooperatives, cultural organizations, etc., are all parts of one great homogenous social machine. This machine, inspired and led by the Communist Party, and rooted in the very life and fibre of the working class, has as its great aim

the organized carrying on of the whole social process in the interest and for the improvement of the great masses of toilers in the industries and on the land. This unity of organization and singleness of purpose make possible the complete mobilization of all the social forces for executing the planned national economy which has been the base of the Soviet system since its inauguration. The 5-Year Plan, with its emphasis on the building of heavy industry, its adoption of the uninterrupted work-week, the 5-day week and the 7-hour day, its introduction of the most modern industrial technique, its systematic improvement of the conditions of the workers, etc., is the first outstanding example of such an organized planned economy. But the 5-Year Plan will not be the last of such. On the contrary, it will soon be followed by still greater and even more startling programs of social development.

Compare this scientific national social organization with the chaos and planlessness of capitalism. The capitalist system, built upon the principle of private ownership and profit, is inherently individualistic and competitive. The individual capitalists and groups of capitalists grab what they can of the industries. Then, bitterly exploiting the workers with the aid of their government, they violently compete with each other in production and distribution. Capitalists compete against capitalists, one section of an industry against the other sections, one industry against another industry, one country against the rest. Under such circumstances production cannot be upon a planned basis. This planlessness is further emphasized by the insoluble capitalist problem of securing markets for the commodities that have been produced. Nor can this basic chaos of capitalism be cured by trustification. That simply changes the forms of the competition somewhat and intensifies the struggle between the rival capitalist combinations.

Such a planned program of industrialization and raising of the workers' standards as embodied in the 5-Year Plan is unthinkable under capitalism. Not only because economically the capitalist system is unable to carry through such an organized industrial production, but also because the very thought of carrying on production for the benefit of the actual producers is totally

foreign to capitalism. Capitalism is organized for the benefit of the owners of the industries, the capitalist class. They look upon the workers as a set of god-given slaves to be exploited for their interests. It is exactly in developing the social organization for the benefit of the working masses instead of a parasitic owning class that is the very heart of the revolution. The whole capitalist system represents an entirely lower stage of social development, economically and politically. In order to make such a program as the 5-Year Plan possible in the United States and other capitalist countries, it will first require the proletarian revolution.

#### (b) *Vast Financial Economies*

Not only does the Soviet system plan its economy, and not only is it the aim of this economy to advance the conditions of the workers, but a further advantage of the Soviet system is that it is free of the great financial drains characteristic of capitalism, the untold billions raked off from capitalist industry, at the expense of the workers, to keep up myriads of socially useless and parasitic elements. The Soviet Government is able to apply the whole product of industry to constructive ends. The great rake off of the capitalist owners, which in the United States ranges from 10 per cent to 30 per cent yearly of the yield of industry, is wiped out completely. The vast amounts which under capitalism would go to the capitalist owners remain in industry and productive use. One great thing the Russian revolution has done, is to show beyond all question that the capitalist, whether in his capacity as "owner" or "manager" of industry, is worse than useless, that he is an encumbrance on social development.

And with the abolition of the gigantic graft of the capitalists goes also that of the landlords. It is the brazen function of these individuals under capitalism to seize upon the very earth itself and to force the useful producers to pay them for the privilege of a place to live or work. But in the Soviet Union this age long crime is stopped. The millions and billions that under capitalism would be handed over to the landlords, the workers now keep. The land, like the industries, is owned by the Workers' Government, which means by the working class.

The revolutionary and scientific Soviet system has wiped out



a whole mass of other related socially useless elements and exploiters of the workers. The great state industrial trusts deal directly with each other and with the consumers through the cooperatives, thereby eliminating the vast armies of middlemen, wholesalers, jobbers, commission men and other capitalist similar riff raff. The gigantic cooperative retail system knocks out the multitudes of petty shop keepers, each of whom picked the workers' pockets for his profits. Likewise, the fabulous costs of selling the products of industry customary under capitalism (which in the United States amount to 8 billion dollars out of a total yearly sale of 40 billions) are cut out practically completely. Gone are the hordes of high pressure salesmen insurance agents, lawyers, brokers, advertising men, real estate sharks, stock speculators, strike-breaking agencies, and the innumerable other ragtag and bobtail of capitalist society. Not only has the Soviet system saved the vast funds wasted on these useless armies of social parasites, but especially it is rid of their reactionary political influence.

Capitalism is still able to force some of its harmful and gigantic expenditures upon the Soviet Union, as, for example, the necessity for it to maintain a substantial army to defend itself from the enemy capitalist world. But this is only temporary. Militarism, and the huge waste of life and social substance that goes with it, will die with capitalism. When the workers of the various countries, following the example of the Russians, overthrow their capitalist systems and establish the world Soviet Union this will strike a death blow to the hoary institution of war. The workers' world society, based upon collectivism instead of individualism, upon cooperation instead of competition, upon production for use instead of for profit, will have no use for war. It will mark the beginning of the real consolidation and organization of the human race.

Soviet socialized industry, which forms the overwhelming mass of the industry generally, is free of capitalist parasites. It is healthy and all its resources can be and are utilized for promoting the interests of the toilers and for the further extension of the industrial system. This inherent financial strength, in conjunction with the planfulness and proletarian aim of all Soviet

production, has contributed enormously to the success of the 5-Year Plan. It has made possible extremely rapid accumulation of capital. This is one of the greatest marvels of the whole Russian situation. The world's capitalists thought it to be entirely out of the question to industrialize the Soviet Union without the aid of foreign capital, and they were doubly careful not to lend such capital. But the industrialization is not only taking place, but at an unprecedented rate, and almost entirely with Russian resources. So great is the success in this respect that recently Stalin declared that the problem of capital accumulation in the Soviet Union had been practically solved.

#### (c) *Socialist Mass Incentive*

The foregoing practical superiorities of the Socialist system have contributed much to the tremendous success of the 5-Year Plan, and the workers, with such a gigantic new industrial machine to look after, are only beginning to take advantage of its huge resources and superiorities. But a further factor of the most vital significance in the success is the tremendous revolutionary incentive developed among the working masses. This incentive expresses itself through the most determined efforts, marked by self-sacrifice and real heroism, to make the 5-Year Plan a success. So fierce is this revolutionary incentive, this mass endeavor to build the industries and the new society, that it lends a character of the very sharpest struggle to the present Socialist construction.

Ever since the very birth of the capitalist system employers, trying to find an indispensable function for themselves in society as a justification for exploiting the workers have declared that only privately owned industry cultivates incentive, and that the introduction of Socialism would kill incentive and result in general laziness and stagnation. Their conception of incentive is for the capitalists owning industry to drive the enslaved workers to their tasks under the lash of starvation. Marx and Lenin long ago pointed out the utter fallacy that Socialism would kill incentive and the course of the Russian revolution has justified them completely.

In the Soviet Union, instead of incentive dying out, there has developed a great constructive mass incentive and effort totally

unknown in the capitalist world except in the ranks of the revolutionary movement. The workers realize that they are building their own industry, their own country; that they are developing a real workers' society, one that will give them all possible advantages of modern life, and which will not be an instrument, as capitalist societies are, to fatten up a lot of social parasites at the expense of millions of enslaved workers. This is why the Russian workers fight and work with such boundless enthusiasm and inexhaustible energy. Theirs is not an individualistic incentive but a class incentive. It was this revolutionary incentive that fired their courage to overthrow czarism and capitalism; it steeled their hearts to struggle through the long bitter years of civil war, hunger, and pestilence; it is now carrying them forward with unparalleled success and vigor in the building of socialist industry. Such proletarian enthusiasm and creative ability can never be applied to industry in capitalistic countries.

The Russian workers' revolutionary class incentive throws them forward in a veritable assault against every obstacle that stands in the way of developing their new society. They make herculean efforts to build the new industries. They ruthlessly sweep aside any of their leaders who falter or fail in the keen struggle. Thus they smashed Trotsky when a couple of years ago he put forward his pessimistic theory that the workers could not build Socialism in one country, the Soviet Union; and then during the past year they defeated Bucharin who, believing the obstacles too great for the workers to overcome, wanted to slow down the speed of the industrialization and to make concessions to the enemy kulaks. The fight against the right danger (the Bucharin tendency to weaken in the struggle) is prosecuted in every workshop and factory.

The workers carry on a relentless self-criticism and their leaders do the same. The fight against bureaucratism is never-ending. Incompetent and unreliable elements are systematically weeded out of the Party and key positions of all institutions. From their slender resources the workers float loans to help in the industrialization. The last such loan was for 750,000,000 roubles, and the workers added another 150,000,000 roubles to it.

The Russian workers battle resolutely on for Socialism.

whether the weapons in hand be rifles or monkey wrenches. They realize that every new factory built means not only an additional foundation stone in their new society, but also a fortress to help defend it from the inevitable capitalist armed attack. It is this indomitable spirit of the workers above all that is making such a world startling success of the 5-Year Plan.

One of the most striking of the many forms of expression of the prevailing tremendous working class incentive is the newly established "Socialist Competition." This, of course, has nothing in common with the destructive competition which lies at the base of capitalism. Through Socialist competition the workers vie with each other in accomplishing specific tasks in the building of Socialism. It is a means for bringing forth the creative spirit of the working masses. Thus groups of workers will challenge and compete against each other in a given shop, or factory against factory, or industry against industry, etc. Of course, with the highly developed protective social legislation and general free conditions in Russian industry, this competition has none of the destructive features of the speed-up in capitalist industry. The youth are usually the leaders in this vital movement. In 1918, Lenin outlined the principles of Socialist competition, but it was not practically applied until last year. The increase in productivity from this source runs from 10 per cent to 50 per cent.

Socialist competition, expressed in many forms, now becomes international in scope. The various Communist Parties, revolutionary unions, etc., challenge each other to compete in fulfilling their revolutionary tasks. Thus the great Tregolnik rubber factory of Leningrad, with 20,000 workers, has a competition with the 16,000 workers of the big Leuna chemical works in Germany. The revolutionary workers in the Leuna plant pledge themselves to accomplish by a given date certain important specific tasks of the organization and education of the masses of workers in their works for the battle against the employers and the social fascists. And the Tregolnik workers, for their part, agree to raise their output 200 per cent instead of the 177 per cent called for by the 5-Year Plan; to increase the productivity per worker 42 per cent instead of 35 per cent; to cut production costs 17 per cent instead of 10 per cent, and to finish their quota

of the 5-Year Plan in 4 years. Many other international Socialist competitions are now in effect. Thus at the recent meeting of the General Council of the Red International of Labor Unions the National Minority Movement of Great Britain and the Unity Confederation of Labor of France challenged the Trade Union Unity League (which accepted) to compete in building their membership, extending their labor journals, developing their work in the colonies, etc.

(d) *The Role of the Trade Unions*

The Russian trade unions, numbering over 11,000,000 workers organized into 23 different industrial organizations, play a most vital role in the Soviet regime and especially in carrying through the 5-Year Plan. They are the great mass organizations for mobilizing the working class at the point of production. They are foundation stones of the whole Soviet system. They concern themselves directly with the workers' immediate interests and their participation in industry. On questions of wages, hours, and working conditions their say is practically decisive. They also see to it that the elaborate social insurance system and protection for the workers in industry is properly extended and put into effect. They also carry on a vast cultural work through their maze of schools, clubs, libraries, rest homes, etc., etc.. The trade unions are represented, officially or unofficially, in every stage of the Government. Thousands of their leaders and militants are to be found in the innumerable committees and leading organs of the Government. They have their vital say on all social activities.

In production the trade unions are a basic factor. They are the chief means for drawing the masses into the revolutionary industrial program. Although as organizations they do not directly interfere in the Government economic organs, they make up, together with the Communist Party and the economic administration, the "triangle" which directs the course of production in the factories. They are now doing a vast work in carrying through the 5-Year Plan. They educate the masses to the revolutionary meaning of the program; they organize the "production conferences" between the workers and the technical administration

to improve the methods of production; they are prime factors in setting up labor discipline; they organize the Socialist competition; they educate scores of thousands of workers in their schools to help satisfy the voracious demand for skilled workers and technicians; they are the chief vehicle for carrying forward the vast cultural work of the 5-Year Plan; they serve in a hundred other ways to protect the interests of the workers in the industries, those of the unemployed workers, and to modernize and to carry ahead production. The great Russian trade union movement now has in the very center of its program the dynamic slogan: "Complete the 5-Year Plan in 4 Years." And its great task is the mobilization of the working masses so that this can be done.

How insignificant the American Federation of Labor looks in comparison with the gigantic and revolutionary Russian trade unions. The A. F. of L., comprising hardly more than 10 per cent of the working class and split up into 120 separate unions, is led by a clique of plain agents of the employers. They are social fascist tools of the bosses, whose sole function it is to hamstring the workers from struggling against their exploiters and to degenerate the labor movement into a mere auxiliary of the production apparatus and war machine of American imperialism, but the Russian unions, with a vast organization comprising 98 per cent of the whole working class, which have helped to smash the capitalist system and which are a main prop of the revolutionary Workers' Government, are now leading the masses of workers militantly forward, in the teeth of the severest difficulties, to the stupendous accomplishment of the 5-Year Plan and the building of Socialism. Yet the corrupt, ignorant, and capitalistic leaders of the A. F. of L. dare to sneer at the valiant Russian trade unions. Their attacks on the Soviet Union and on the Russian workers are only the voice of their masters, the American capitalist class.

#### IV. An Industrial City—Leningrad

The building of Socialist industry is taking place in all parts of the Soviet Union. New Pittsburgs, Detroit, and Chicagos are being established in Kuzbas (Siberia), Stalingrad, Nizhni Novgorod, Donbas, Dnieperstroy, etc. The old industrial centers are being rebuilt and expanded and gigantic new ones are being created where just recently all was forest or open field. A few facts as to what is taking place generally in Leningrad and specifically in some of its big factories (which the writer visited in January, 1930) will serve to show what is going on all over the Soviet Union at the present time.

Leningrad played a decisive role in overthrowing czarism and capitalism. It was there that the revolution actually began. The revolutionary Leningrad workers fittingly are now shock troops in the great struggle of the working class for Socialist construction. The whole city is a veritable bee hive of industrial growth and activity. Before the revolution Leningrad (then Petrograd) had a population of 1,000,000. By 1921 this had fallen off to 700,000 because of the paralysis caused by the civil war, etc. But now the city has 1,800,000 people, and it is gaining at the rate of 100,000 per year. No American city is growing so fast in population or in industry.

Leningrad, like all other cities, and all individual industries and factories, has its own 5-Year Plan. It calls for a tremendous building of the local industries and workers' culture. The city, which contains about 15 per cent of all Russian industry, is a big center for heavy metal products, marine construction, textiles, shoes, rubber, etc. To these plants are now being added many new metal industries, chemical plants, great power stations, etc. The new industries, exclusive of power plants and transportation developments, will, under the 5-Year Plan, require a new capital investment of 250 million roubles.

In the year ending October, 1928, the total products of Leningrad's industries were valued at 1,383,000,000 roubles; at the end of the 5-Year Plan they will amount to 3,792,000,000 roubles, an increase of 174 per cent. General production costs

will be reduced to 70 per cent of 1928, and factory prices to 79 per cent. To man the enlarged industries, 13,000 additional engineers and technicians must be developed, and at least 150,000 skilled workers trained. Average wages are now about 100 roubles monthly. This is 30 per cent above pre-war, not to speak of at least another 30 per cent that should be added to cover social insurance, lower rents, free medical attendance, etc. The general wage level is to be increased 35 per cent, of which 9 per cent occurs in the current year. About 35 per cent of the workers have the 7-hour day, 15 per cent will get it this year, and all will have it by 1933.

The Leningrad workers have mobilized all their forces—Party, Government, trade unions, cooperatives, etc., and are surging ahead full steam to the accomplishment of these gigantic tasks. Last year they increased their general industrial output 37 per cent. Full of fighting spirit in the face of a thousand difficulties, their slogan is, "Complete the 5-Year Plan in 4 Years," and they will do it. In some sections of their industry it will be finished in two or three years. In the Leningrad district the land is already 100 per cent collectivized.

The whole city is aflame with enthusiasm for the 5-Year Plan. Many factories are decorated with great red streamers calling upon the workers to put militantly through the industrialization. In the movies the shows and news reels make war against bureaucracy, sabotage, and the right danger generally. They show pictures and give statistics of the champion "brigades" in the various Socialist competitions. Everywhere goes on the most concentrated propaganda for industrialization.

The city fairly seethes with optimism and fighting spirit. On all sides are to be seen the myriad evidences of the new revolutionary culture of the workers and their rising standards of living. Hundreds of great apartments are going up, to replace the former wooden shacks of czarism. Great "palaces of culture"—there are three of these in Leningrad costing over 3 million apiece—contain every imaginable institution for educating and entertaining the masses. Close by a great palace of culture they were building a "kitchen-factory"—that is, a great cooking establishment to prepare hot meals of every description for the workers



to take home, thus dealing another blow at housework. This mass cooking system tends to become general. There are schools galore and of every kind. In Leningrad there are 100,000 workers studying industrial subjects alone (not to mention other branches), ranging from courses to equip engineers and red factory directors to instruction in the elements of the skilled trades. In all this work the trade unions play a tremendous role. Besides their innumerable schools, rest houses, sanatoria, etc., they have 100 clubs, many of them of great size and wide popularity. For such clubs alone the 5-Year Plan of the Leningrad trade unions calls for an expenditure of 26 million roubles.

Everywhere, in the city at large and in the factories, are banners, signs, pictures, and general propaganda for industrialization, and against alcoholism and religion. In the Narvsky district of Leningrad, which I visited, there were formerly 71 churches. Now there are only 18. The 53 discontinued for want of attendance have been turned into schools, clubs, etc. The remaining 18 will shortly go the same way. Local movie news reels showed the peasants in the outlying country taking the bells out of their church towers in order to get metal for the electrification of their villages. War against alcoholism is carried on upon all fronts. The Russian workers follow the sensible system of legalizing the sale of alcoholic beverages and then educating the masses against excessive drinking. Every method of propaganda is used against alcoholism and with success. Some are very striking. For example, one can often see special trolley cars, ablaze with hundreds of lights, and decorated with pictures, statistics, etc., against alcoholism, going about the city. But the main battle against alcoholism is in the factories, where the workers themselves directly conduct the struggle. They lay special stress upon the fact that alcoholism is a vital enemy of the 5-Year Plan.

#### (a) *The Red Putilov Works*

This great metal works, founded 125 years ago, is the most famous plant in the Soviet Union. It has long been a basic center of the revolutionary movement and its workers were the leaders in the 1917 revolutions. It now produces heavy metal

machinery, locomotives, turbines, tractors, etc., lately specializing in tractors. The plant is a key link in the new industries of the Soviet Union. Its head is a former metal worker.

The Putilov works has, of course, its 5-Year Plan. This is far exceeding in practice. The plant's experience in recent years is a reflection of the general trials and upswing of Soviet industry. Before the war, in 1912, the plant employed 12,800 workers and produced 23 million roubles worth of products, 75 per cent of which were war materials. In 1921, with only 1,500 workers, production fell almost to zero and it was proposed to shut the place. But now it grows rapidly. It has 14,300 workers, including all forces, and last year its production was valued at 48 million roubles, as against 32 million the year before. This year it will turn out 93 millions' worth and at the end of the 5-Year Plan (which it will finish in less than 4 years) the production value will be boosted to 160 millions.

This tremendous increase in production, far outstripping even the great tasks set for this industry by the 5-Year Plan, is reflected in every phase of its work. The 5-Year Plan calls for a yearly production of 100,000 tons of steel by October, 1933, but already last year 110,000 tons were turned out, and by 1933 the yearly output will be about 300,000 tons, or three times the quota set. The plan also calls for 10,000 tractors yearly by 1933, but 12,000 are being built this year, and 20,000 will be the minimum yearly output by 1933. While making these vast extensions in production, it was also possible to raise wages 8 per cent and to cut factory costs 17 per cent. A splendid achievement all around.

Average monthly wages in the Putilov Works are 118 roubles, as against 107 roubles last year and 48 in 1913. The 7-hour day is in effect for all workers, except the youth and workers in dangerous jobs, who work only 6 hours. There are 1000 women workers. They get the same wages as the men and they work at almost all occupations. The uninterrupted work week is in operation and Socialist competition is highly developed. All the workers are members of one union, the Metal Workers; 3000 of them belong to the Communist Party and 4500 to the Communist Youth. The great works are peppered everywhere with

red banners carrying struggle slogans for industrialization and against alcoholism and religion.

To extend the capacity of the Putilov plant the sum of 60 million roubles is being invested. The vast works is now a maze of building operations. Old machinery and buildings are being torn out and new established—all according to the very latest industrial technique. New rolling mills, blast furnaces, loading docks, etc., are in construction on all sides. Much of this construction work is being done by American firms, with their engineers on the spot. But in such instances, where foreign engineers supervise the installation of machinery coming from their respective countries, the real burden of the directing work falls upon the Russian technical forces.

In the great Red Putilov works, as in Russian factories generally, enthusiasm and optimism reigns. This was evident on all sides. The whole plant was humming with industry and life. It was a real inspiration to see the Russian workers turning out the great stream of tractors, which are bringing Socialism to the peasants and broadening the whole base of the workers' society. It was a living symbol of the victory of the revolution.

#### (b) *An Electrical Manufacturing Plant*

One of the most interesting Leningrad factories I visited was engaged in producing electrical equipment, principally electric meters of various kinds. Built two years ago, it now employs 1700 workers. Formerly all electrical appliances had to be imported. The plant, organized on the German system, is equipped with conveyors and all the latest labor saving devices. It has a special experimental section. At work there, among others, was a worker perfecting a new machine for making delicate springs. Incidentally the heads of this department gave me a demonstration of the superiority of their locally made springs over those produced in Germany and the United States.

Last year this plant turned out 1,900,000 roubles worth of products. This year its output will be at least 8 millions. The 5-Year Plan calls for an increase to 30 millions by 1933, with 3500 workers. But this output will be accomplished by the end of 1931, or in three years all told since the inauguration of the

5-Year Plan. An indication of the tremendous speed at which production is being increased is shown by the facts that the day before I visited the factory there were 485 meters produced; by two months this will be increased to 1000 daily, and in 6 months to 1500. Characteristically, many sections of the newly constructed additional building were being filled up with conveyors and machinery. The red director of this plant, a former worker, estimated that Socialist competition increased output 20 per cent.

Here again was the same enthusiasm, the same determination to far surpass the quota of the 5-Year Plan, which pessimists, only a year ago, declared impossible of accomplishment. There was the same comradely working together of department and plant heads with the workers—this is one of the inspiring sights of Russian industry. There is absolutely no slave-driving tactics or bureaucratic methods tolerated by the Russian workers. They are splendidly militant. When some department head errs by falling into bureaucratic practices he is brought up with a round turn by finding his wrong actions written up on the factory bulletin board and by being compelled to make serious answer to the Party and the union. Russian workers are free workers and they are not building the industries to in any way enslave themselves. The war against bureaucratism is intransigent and never-ending.

This plant is only one of a whole series of electrical manufacturing works that are now being built in various sections of the Soviet Union as part of the general plan of establishing a real base under the whole industrial system. I visited another of these plants, this time in Moscow. It produces various kinds of electrical apparatus, from electric light globes to giant transformers and motors. It now employs 6500 workers. The 5-Year Plan calls for 11,000 workers by 1933, but it will have at least 15,000, with corresponding increases in output. One of the present favorite arguments of capitalist enemies of the Soviet Union is that the Russian workers will not know how to operate the great industries which they are building with such tremendous speed. The nonsense of this argument is typically illustrated by the experience of this Moscow plant which is producing electric light globes so efficiently that they are being sold in the German

market in competition with the products of the great German electrical plants. This invasion of the foreign markets by Soviet products is explained by the fact that the Soviet Government now has to export what it can in order to get the necessary machinery for building its industries.

(c) *A Great Shoe Factory*

The "Scorohog" shoe factory is one of the larger Leningrad plants. Built before the war, it employs 12,500 workers, the majority of whom are women. During the past three years its increase in output averaged 48 per cent per year. In the year ending October, 1928, it produced 6,600,000 pairs of shoes of various kinds; last year it boosted its output to 10,000,000 pairs, and next year it will turn out 14,000,000 pairs. There is no slack season, the great plant roars away ceaselessly at its work. The 7-hour workday and the uninterrupted work week will be introduced shortly. The 5-Year Plan quota will be exceeded within the 4-year period.

The old factory is being gradually rebuilt and renovated. The former primitive machinery and methods are being rapidly discarded and the most modern systems installed. Constantly new shipments of machinery are being received from the United States and Germany. This machinery is tested and studied in a special experimental section before being installed in the general system of the factory. Already a number of the departments are equipped with conveyor systems and they operate with an efficiency equal to that of the best American factories.

Daily wages in this factory range from 4½ roubles for the unskilled to 6 to 7 for the skilled. The 5-Year Plan provides for a 30 per cent wage increase. It is no exaggeration to say the bulk of the Russian shoe workers have already achieved higher wage and living standards than have American shoe workers—not to speak of the Russians' incomparably better political situation.

The necessity to import machinery for the shoe industry and others constitutes a traditional weakness in the Russian industrial system which would be especially crucial in case of war. That is why such heroic efforts are now being made to develop the

basic industries, especially those producing machinery, chemicals, electrical apparatus, etc. Vast progress has already been made in this respect. The new Russian machines, built according to the very latest technique, are beginning to appear in all the industries. They are pioneers of the new Socialist order and the workers greet them with real enthusiasm. It gives one a genuine revolutionary thrill to see these new evidences of the victory of the Russian workers over untold obstacles. The workers exhibit their Russian-made machines with justifiable pride. In viewing these new machines and flourishing industries, one cannot help thinking what a great distance has been travelled since 1921 when, with the industries wrecked by the wars, long rows of idle locomotives stood on the tracks and machinery everywhere was out of commission for want of even the simplest metal parts.

(d) *The Red Flag Textile Mill*

This is a huge Leningrad enterprise. It is built around the core of an old mill; but there is little left of the latter except its tradition. Great new additions, of massive concrete, have been built, with the most modern systems of lighting, heating, and ventilating. There is hardly a finer textile mill anywhere in the United States. The red director is a former metal worker, 37 years old.

The plant now employs about 6000 workers. 80 per cent of whom are women. It will have at least 15,000 by 1933. It exhibits the usual stupendous growth in production. In 1923 the value-product of the mill was 4 million roubles; in 1928 it was 15½ millions; last year it was 27½ million (6 per cent above the quota) and at the end of the 5-Year Plan it will be 150 millions. The enthusiastic director was sure they could accomplish the 5-Year Plan in 4 years.

Just two weeks before I visited this plant the 7-hour day and the uninterrupted work week were introduced. Already great economies were manifest. Average wages are about 3½ roubles per day, with a 50 per cent wage increase foreseen in the 5-Year Plan. Socialist competition is well developed between groups of workers in individual departments and between departments. The mill as a whole is in competition with a big Moscow textile

factory. These textile workers are also undoubtedly ahead of many American textile workers, despite the myriad difficulties they have confronted. In 5 years they will be far better off regarding wages (not to speak of hours, working conditions, social insurance, and general political situation) than American textile workers generally.

In this big textile mill, which was a veritable hive of activity, the institution could be seen growing under one's very eyes. Building was going on everywhere, with new power plants, new factory sections, etc., being erected. In the vast newly completed buildings rows of new looms were being installed, like fresh soldiers joining the battlefield, and these were being manned with freshly recruited workers. The whole business made one fairly gasp in astonishment. All the machinery being installed is of the very latest type, mostly German. The new big dyeing plants are American. The workers exhibited as curiosities the old Russian machinery, the unbelievable primitive dyeing, drying, weaving apparatus, etc., which they are discarding. Much of the new machinery is now being made in the Soviet Union. The Red Flag mill was an inspiration, a glowing demonstration of the power of the workers, and of the victory of the revolution.

The foregoing facts give a general idea of how Leningrad's workers fight on and win in the great struggle for Socialist Construction. And what takes place in Leningrad is being repeated in many other industrial centers. In Leningrad, as elsewhere, the situation is very difficult. But the workers, steeled in long years of revolutionary struggle, are not appalled. In their ranks is only enthusiasm, courage, determination. They battle ahead irresistibly, smashing every obstacle. They are a worthy section of the heroic Russian working class whose accomplishments in building Socialism are now astounding the whole world.

## V. Victories Won—Struggles Ahead—The Trade Union Unity League

### (a) *A Record of Victory*

The progress of the Russian revolution has been made in the face of tremendous problems and severest world capitalist opposition. Especially vicious has been the enmity of the Socialists, or social fascists of the A. F. of L. and S. P. stripe. They have urged, as tools of the bosses, that the revolution must fail, that it means only starvation, chaos, misery. Their aim is to turn the workers against the revolution and to win them for their own program of supporting the rotten capitalist system under the guise of reforming it. They are the bitterest enemies of the Soviet Union. They always support every capitalist attack against it.

First, the seizure of power by the workers in 1917, they said, was all wrong. The workers should have supported the capitalist Kerensky government and continued the war. Then, they said, that the workers could not defend their revolutionary government against the capitalist attacks, attacks which the Russian socialists aided with arms. But again their counter-revolutionary aims and hopes were frustrated. The building of the Red Army and the defeating of all the counter-revolutionary armies, those of the United States, Great Britain, etc., as well as of Wrangel, Yudenitch, Koltchack, etc., was one of the greatest military achievements in history.

Next the Social Democrats declared that it would be impossible for the Russian workers to reconstruct the wrecked industries and to operate them. The economic blockade, the political isolation of the Soviet Government by the capitalist world, the great famine, the intricate problems of managing industry, the sabotage of the engineers, the setting up of labor discipline in the industries, the stabilization of the rouble and balancing of the state budget, etc., were all insoluble problems and sentenced the revolution to death. How the Social Democrats gloated in



1921 when the Soviet Government adopted the New Economic Policy, which permitted private trade and industry within certain limits. This, they said together with the capitalists of the world, was surely the end. The great revolution was over, the workers were turning back to capitalism.

But the workers utterly wrecked these counter-revolutionary hopes. They smashed the economic blockade and they also forced every important country in the world except the U. S. to give them diplomatic recognition. They overcame the famine. They mastered the intricacies of industrial management. They defeated the sabotage of the engineers. They established an unequalled labor discipline, stabilized the currency, balanced the budget, exploited the NEP, as Lenin foresaw, to build the new industries, etc. They overcame a thousand problems which the capitalist and their reactionary labor tools said were hopeless.

Then these capitalist elements thought they saw the downfall of the Soviet regime through internal dissension, through the fights against Trotsky and Bucharin and their opportunistic programs. But again bitter disappointment for the foes of the Soviet Union. The revolution emerged stronger than ever from these struggles. The goal of the workers was clarified, their ranks unified still more solidly.

When reconstruction of the old industries had been completed and the building of new industries started, the defeatist chorus of the Social Democrats came again. The thing could not be done. The workers had no capital, no experience, the 5-Year Plan was a joke. But again defeat for these bosses' tools. The enormous success of the 5-Year Plan is the revolutionary answer of the workers.

But the enemies of the Soviet Union still had what they all along thought was a real "ace in the hole"—the peasantry. Never, they said will the Communist Party be able to draw these masses into the program of Socialism. How the A.F. of L. leaders and the "scientific" S.P.ites harped on this string. But, now also, even this hope is gone with the monster growth of the state farms and collectives. This was the hardest blow of all.

(b) *The Struggle Ahead*

Great are the victories of the Russian workers. But the fight is not yet won. The major struggle still lies ahead—the overthrowing of world capitalism by the international working class. The battle for Socialism is a world battle. Only when the power of the big imperialist governments is broken internationally will it be possible to bring Socialism to its full fruition in the Soviet Union and in other countries.

The capitalists of the world, realizing that in the Soviet Union, covering one-sixth of the world's surface, the workers have a powerful fortress, are systematically preparing a military attack against the Soviet Union. They have made an armed camp of Poland and other states bordering the Soviet Union. This is only a continuation of their long anti-Soviet policy. They await only a favorable opportunity to launch the attack. They thought they had this chance when their tools, the Chinese war lords, recently seized the Chinese Eastern Railroad in Manchuria; but the Russians were able to turn this incident into a splendid victory. The danger of the capitalist assault upon the Soviet Union becomes all the more acute with the great success of the 5-Year Plan, which not only undermines capitalism economically but inspires the workers of the world to struggle against it politically.

The main reliance of the capitalists in their never-ending struggle against the Soviet Union has always been the Social fascists—that is labor leaders of the A. F. of L. and S. P. type. These elements, with their fake "labor" program of reforming capitalism; in reality of supporting it militantly, are often more bitter enemies of the Soviet Union than the very capitalists themselves. The historical role of such misleaders of labor is to serve as the last bulwark of the capitalist system. The danger of war against the Soviet Union becomes more imminent with the accession to power of the "Socialist" Government in Germany and the Labor Government in England. When the capitalists make their big assault on the Soviet Union it will be such fake labor elements that will lead it.

The defense of the Soviet Union is the major political task of the world's workers. The overthrow of the Soviet Govern-

ment would usher in international fascism and would be the most terrific defeat the workers have ever suffered. On the other hand its maintenance means a tremendous stimulation of the growing world offensive against capitalism. The Soviet Union is the leader and stronghold of the world revolution. The fight to defend the Soviet Union is inextricably bound up with the struggle against imperialist war. Every imperialist war, as for example, between Great Britain and the United States, would be bound to develop into a war against the Soviet Union, which the capitalist countries, in spite of their rivalries, always recognize as their major enemy.

American workers must mobilize their full power to fight against imperialist war, and especially war against the Soviet Union. This implies in the first place a relentless struggle against the social fascist leaders of the A. F. of L. and S. P. stripe, the so-called "progressive" wing of the A. F. of L., the Muste group, included. One very important way to do this is to acquaint the most working masses with the great achievements now being made by the Russian workers. The A. F. of L. and S. P. leaders have lied for a dozen years against the Soviet Union, supporting every capitalist attack against it, repeating every capitalist slander. They have tried to make the workers believe that revolution means for the workers misery, hunger, and demoralization. They held up the Soviet Union as the world's horrible example. But now, with the overwhelming success of the 5-Year Plan, is the strategic time to ram these lies down their own throats, to expose these capitalistic labor misleaders before the workers, and to inspire the masses with the great message of hope and struggle now being voiced by the course of events in the Soviet Union. More than that, it is necessary to put into effect the whole program of the Trade Union Unity League.

(c) *The Trade Union Unity League*

The Trade Union Unity League mobilizes the workers for struggle to defend their immediate interests now and for the eventual overthrow of the capitalist system. The conditions of the American working class constantly grow worse. Many millions

now walk the streets unemployed, and those who do have work are driven at an unheard of speed, literally burning them up. Wage cuts are the order of the day. Hunger and want are the portion of the useful producers. Resentment, radicalization, determination to struggle, grows among the workers. They begin to fight, to take the initiative against their employers. This is typical of the world-wide growing offensive of the working masses against capitalism, which intensifies as the crisis of capitalism sharpens. More and more the capitalists make use of the courts, the troops, the police, etc. Increasingly they turn to fascist violence to beat back the workers. This is true of the United States as well as of other parts of the world.

The A. F. of L. cannot and will not organize and lead these discontented masses. It has organized only a small fraction of the workers, principally the skilled. It does not fight the employers, but "cooperates" with them. This "cooperation" degenerates it into a mere auxiliary of the rationalization (speed up of industry) and war programs of American imperialism. It becomes practically a strike-breaking agency, to beat back the struggles of the unorganized and unskilled workers, the great masses of the unemployed. The recent Hoover-A. F. of L. agreement for no wage increases during the economic crisis is but the latest of its strike-breaking tactics. The A. F. of L. leadership, corrupt to the core, is an unblushing agency of the employers, an enemy of the working class.

The so-called "progressive" wing of the A. F. of L., the Muste group composed mostly of Socialists and former labor partyites, only serves with its pretence at radicalism, to put a more acceptable mass front upon the A. F. of L. leadership, to cover up the latter's corruption and treachery, and to deceive and draw masses of workers under its control. Basically, the Muste program is the same as that of the official A. F. of L., cooperation with the employers. It is the insidious enemy of all militant struggle and organization among the workers. The TUUL fights aggressively against both the Green-Woll and Muste-S.P. sections of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy. The T. U. U. L. also fights against the Lovestone and Cannon renegade Communist

groups whose policy feeds the Muste group and tends to undermine the fighting spirit of the workers.

Only the Trade Union Unity League can and does lead the workers in struggle against the employers and the state as a trade union organization. The TUUL is based upon the principles of class struggle. It fights militantly against the treacherous A. F. of L.—S. P. policy of collaboration and arbitration with the bosses, which means surrender of the workers to the unbridled exploitation of the employers. The TUUL is the national center for all revolutionary trade unions and also of the left wing groups in the conservative unions.

The TUUL leads in the organization of the unorganized. It establishes its unions in the various industries. It builds strike committees, action committees and shop committees to facilitate the organization and struggle of the unorganized masses. It builds left wing groups in the reactionary unions to fight against the social fascist leadership there. The TUUL bases itself primarily upon the great masses of unskilled and sem-skilled workers, the most exploited sections of the workers. Especially it devotes itself to the organization of the youth, Negroes, and women workers, doubly exploited sections of the working class, who are systematically betrayed by the A. F. of L. It bases its organizations upon the principle of industrial unionism, combatting the craft unionism, high dues, high initiation fees and high salary practices of the A. F. of L.

The TUUL fights against unemployment. It organizes the unorganized into councils of the unemployed and connects up their struggles with those of the employed. Against unemployment it demands chiefly the introduction of the 7-hour day, 5-day week, and a comprehensive system of state unemployment benefits to be paid for by the capitalists and the government and administered by the workers. "Work or Wages" is the TUUL slogan.

The TUUL fights against capitalist rationalization of industry (speed-up), for wage increases and against wage cuts. One of its major aims is to lead the Negro workers in the struggle. For Negroes it demands full social, political, and racial equality.

and the right of self-determination. It puts forward special demands for women workers. It organizes the young workers as one of the basic tasks confronting the working class. Self criticism, the frank acknowledgement before the masses of mistakes made in the struggle, is one of the main policies of the TUUL.

The TUUL is a revolutionary organization. Its aim is to broaden and deepen the everyday struggles of the workers into a revolutionary fight against the capitalist system itself. To this end it seeks to politicalize the struggles of the workers, to give them a class character, to direct them against the capitalist state as well as against individual employers. It works for the mass political strike and supports the revolutionary political organization and action of the workers. It combats the Muste-S. P. proposals for a Labor Party as a maneuver that would only play into the hands of the employers and their tools, the social fascists. In its fight against the increasing fascist violence, the T. U. U. L. advocates the formation of workers' defense corps.

The TUUL, recognizing that the American working class movement is an integral part of the world battle against capitalism, works in cooperation with the struggling workers in all countries. It is the American section of the Red International of Labor Unions, which leads the world trade union struggle of the workers. The TUUL cooperates with the struggling masses in the colonial countries, first of all in Latin America, in their battle against American imperialism. It supports the revolutionary Latin American Confederation of Labor and combats the imperialistic Pan-American Federation of Labor. It is affiliated to the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat, and its respective industrial unions and leagues are connected up with the corresponding industrial sections of the RILU. The TUUL fights shoulder to shoulder with the workers of the world against the war danger, for the defense of the Soviet Union, for the overthrow of world imperialism. It is the expression in the United States of the revolutionary movement which now shows, by the great victories in the Soviet Union, its tremendous possibilities for the working class.

Every real battle of the working class finds the TUUL in

the forefront. The TUUL leads wherever the workers are in struggle against the bosses and their agents, the social fascists of the A. F. of L. and S. P. In Gastonia, in New Bedford, in Passaic, in the coal fields of Southern Illinois and Pennsylvania, in the needle trades of New York, in the present big movements of the unemployed, in innumerable battles against the misleaders inside and outside of the reactionary trade unions, the TUUL has written its name indelibly in the history of the American working class. But all these battles are only skirmishes compared with the giant struggles that are soon to come and in which the TUUL will play the leading role as the revolutionary trade union organization. The place for every worker, eager to fight for better conditions now and for the abolition of the capitalist system, is in the ranks of the Trade Union Unity League.

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